



# Montgomery County Council

*From the Office of Councilmember Nancy Floreen*

---

---

**For Immediate Release**

**December 17, 2003**

---

---

Contact: Merle Steiner 240-777-7961

**N  
E  
W  
S  
  
R  
E  
L  
E  
A  
S  
E**

## **Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee Approves Plan to Improve Air Quality**

### ***Floreen: Montgomery County A Leader in Effort***

The Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWACQ) today approved the 2002 -2005 State Implementation Plan (SIP) for public comment today. MWAQC is responsible to the mayor of the District of Columbia and the governors of Maryland and Virginia and responsible for preparing an air quality plan for the Metro DC area.

The SIP is a plan required by the Environmental Protection Agency under the Clean Air Act and is intended to show progress being made to improve air quality in the Washington region and the efforts underway to assure that all necessary steps are taken to reach the federal health standard for ground-level ozone by 2005.

"As a region, we should be proud of our containment of air pollution," said Councilmember Nancy Floreen, who was also elected Vice Chair of MWAQC today. "The plan shows that that, between 1990 and 2005, our regional population and employment increased by an estimated 27 percent and 24 percent, respectively. Even though this growth has increased the number of miles our residents drive by 21 percent, we have succeeded in reducing auto emissions by 38 percent.

"That's good, but not good enough," said Floreen. "We still have a huge problem with pollution – and Montgomery County has been working creatively to address it. We have taken a leadership role by spearheading a regional wind power purchase effort, the purchase of alternative fuel vehicles, and the

(more...)

page two

accelerated replacement of low-emission gasoline cans.”

In addition, Montgomery County and other local governments are developing additional measures that go beyond current EPA requirements and reduce emissions even further. These measures are categorized in the Air Quality Gold Book (also approved for public comment today). Included in the Gold Book is Montgomery County’s episodic measures initiative for which the County recently received an award from Clean Air Partners (a regional public/private organization seeking to reduce emissions on Code Red days).

Public hearings regarding the SIP and the Gold Book will be held on January 19 and January 26. For more information, or to submit comments, contact MWAQC at 202-962-3200. Copies of the SIP and the Gold Book are available at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments website: <http://www.mwcog.org/environment/air>.

# # #